STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY HEALTH
LANSING

JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

JANET OLSZEWSKI
DIRECTOR

January 2, 2008

Dear Colleagues:

In a continuous effort to provide the highest quality public health testing and be a responsible steward of public resources, the Michigan Department of Community Health Bureau of Laboratories (BOL) has re-evaluated our testing algorithms for mycobacterial identification and susceptibility testing. We are committed to continuing timely, high quality public health testing, and to accomplish both of these mandates we have streamlined some of our current testing. BOL will maintain our strict quality standards for reagents, technology and personnel. The testing changes and effective dates are as follows:

1) The algorithm used by BOL to identify mycobacteria will change starting February 1, 2008.
    a) Patients' initial isolates that are identified with high confidence by high performance liquid chromatography (HPLC) as *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* complex will receive a complete biochemical identification. Subsequent isolates from the same patient will only be identified to the *M. tuberculosis* complex level.
    b) HPLC high confidence results alone will be used to speciate mycobacteria other than tuberculosis (MOTT). If the isolate cannot be identified with a high degree of confidence using HPLC, the isolate will be reported as MOTT. Further identification of these isolates will only be available by request.

2) As of January 1, 2008, susceptibility testing for mycobacteria will be limited to the *M. tuberculosis* complex.

I regret any inconvenience that these changes may cause. However, these changes were necessary to target limited resources for critical public health issues. We hope that advanced notice of these changes will allow you ample time to make alternative arrangements for testing when indicated. Please fell free to contact me at 517-335-8063 if you have any additional questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Frances Pouch Downes, Dr.P.H.
Laboratory Director